

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application and the rejection of claims 13-17, 19 and 20 are respectfully requested. Applicants have attempted to address every objection and ground for rejection in the Office Action dated December 6, 2002 (Paper No. 8) and believe the application is now in condition for allowance. FIG. 2 has been amended by replacing reference character "41" with reference character "45" to distinguish between the depending legs and the first side. Claims 13-17, 19 and 20 have been amended and claims 21-33 have been added to more clearly describe the present invention.

Claims 1-12 and 18 have been withdrawn without traverse as being drawn to a nonelected invention. Those claims have now been cancelled and Applicants have filed a divisional application for them.

Claims 13, 19 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by LaPointe et al. (5518298) ("LaPointe"). With respect to independent claim 13, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because the cited reference does not disclose or suggest a blade portion in a substantially coaxial relationship with a sheath portion as recited, inter alia, in independent claim 13 of the present invention, as amended. LaPointe discloses a seatback bracket 92 including a lower portion 96 having an aperture 98, a lower connecting portion 100, and a lip portion 106 extending transversely to an upper portion 104. The lip portion 106 includes at an upper end an aperture 108 which enables a threaded fastener 110 to extend therethrough to securely fix the lip portion 106 to an arm portion 48 of a side wall

26 of the furniture frame. Furthermore, the bracket 92 has a central portion 102 which slidably receives a mating bracket 93. The central portion 102 is configured so that the mating bracket 93 is laterally-offset relative to the lower portion 96, used to mount the bracket 92 to the frame at the upper end. In addition, the mounting aperture 108 located at the upper end of the bracket 92 is also laterally-offset from the central portion 102.

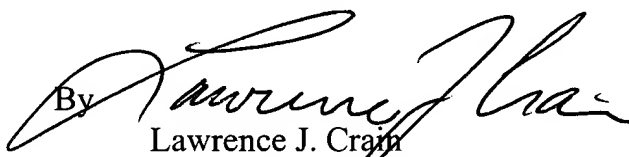
In contrast, claims 13 and 20 as amended, among other things, recite a sheath portion in a substantially coaxial relationship with a blade formation so that the blade portion can be slidably disassembled from the sheath portion. This structure is not disclosed or suggested by LaPointe, and further, could not be incorporated into LaPointe without substantial modification.

With respect to independent claim 19, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because the cited reference does not disclose or suggest a sheath portion in alignment with a mounting formation of a blade portion as recited, inter alia, in independent claim 19 of the present invention, as amended. As noted above, LaPointe discloses an offset relationship between the mating bracket 93 and the mounting hardware 108, 96. Claim 19, however, recites a sheath portion configured so that, upon assembly of a bracket, said sheath portion is in alignment with a mounting portion of a blade formation. In addition to the above asserted arguments, new claims 21-33 recite additional features not disclosed or suggested by LaPointe. Accordingly, the rejection based on LaPointe is respectfully traversed.

Applicants submit that in view of the above-identified amendments and remarks, the claims in their present form are patentably distinct over the art of record. Allowance of the rejected claims is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner discover there are remaining issues which may be resolved by a telephone interview, he is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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